

To: Mylott, Richard[Mylott.Richard@epa.gov]
From: Morning Consult
Sent: Mon 9/12/2016 12:12:35 PM
Subject: Morning Consult Energy: WRDA Takes the Stage This Week; Volkswagen Engineer Pleads Guilty to Criminal Charge Stemming From Scandal

By Asha Glover

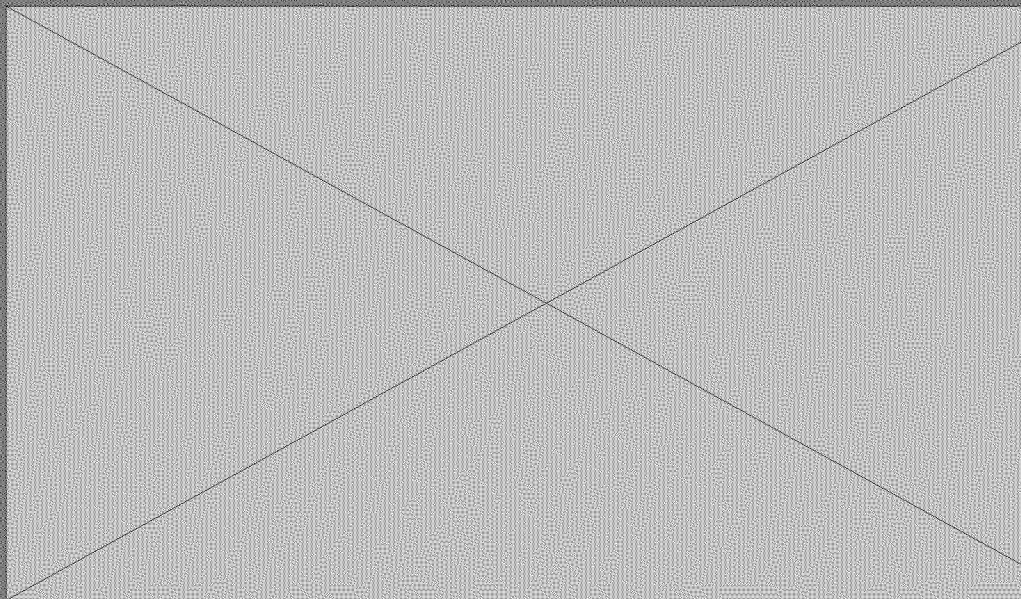
Today's Washington Brief

- The Senate is working to pass the Water Resources and Development Act, which includes \$220 million in funding to address the Flint, Mich., water crisis. The House Science Committee will hold a hearing this week on Congress' "subpoena authority and recourse for failure to comply with lawfully issued subpoenas" - coming after a back-and-forth between the New York and Massachusetts attorneys general and House Science Committee Chairman Lamar Smith (R-Texas) over investigations into how much Exxon Mobil Corp. knew about climate change. ([Morning Consult](#))
- The Army Corps of Engineers will not authorize the Dakota Access pipeline's construction on federal land bordering or under Lake Oahe, "until it can determine whether it will need to reconsider" earlier steps it took to authorize the pipeline, the Department of Justice, Department of the Army, and Department of the Interior announced in a joint statement Friday. The move walked back a decision by U.S. District Judge James Boasberg to deny the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe's request to block construction on the \$3.8 billion pipeline, which said it was likely the Army complied with the National Historic Preservation Act in its decision to grant permits for the project. ([The Associated Press](#))
- Vice President Joe Biden indicated there needs to be a shift to help people transition from more physical jobs that thrived in the past to jobs that are in higher demand now. Biden said there aren't many people "shoveling coal" anymore, and that lawmakers and unemployed workers need to be more forward-thinking to figure out the industries where jobs are being created. ([Washington Examiner](#))

Today's Business Brief

- An engineer for Volkswagen AG pleaded guilty to participating in the company's emissions rigging in a Detroit federal court on Friday. The charge is the first criminal charge in the Justice Department's investigation into the automaker's scandal. (

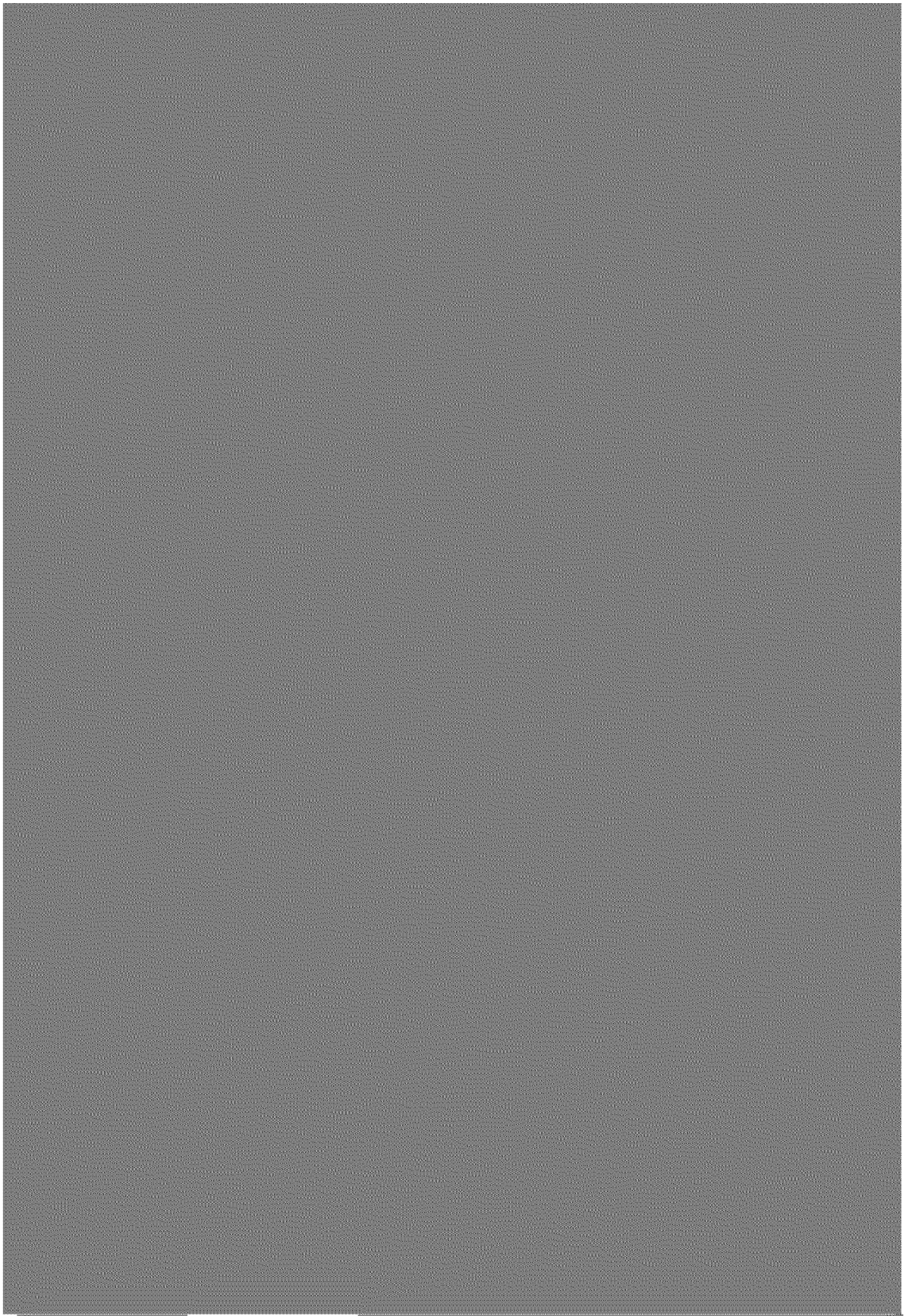
Today's Chart Review



Mark Your Calendars (All Times Eastern)

Monday

<u>SEIA and SEPA hold solar power conference</u>	7 a.m.
<u>SGO holds a forum on energy storage</u>	7:30 a.m.
<u>Brookings holds a discussion on clean power policies</u>	11 a.m.
<u>Atlantic Council holds a discussion on clean energy in U.S.</u>	12 p.m.



General

Behind-the-scenes talks on an wide-ranging energy bill will continue, even though its strongest supporters are well aware that they are unlikely to make much progress before the election. The conferees met last week to discuss the remaining sticking points between the House and Senate versions, which are disagreements about the Land and Water Conservation Fund and wildfire management as well as concern about funding for California's drought and basic energy infrastructure.

A veteran Volkswagen AG engineer pleaded guilty to conspiring to defraud U.S. regulators and customers, the first criminal charge in the Justice Department's year-long investigation into the company's rigging of federal air-pollution tests. The engineer, James Liang, who entered his plea in Detroit federal court on Friday, is cooperating with the investigation, increasing pressure on higher-ranking officials of the company.

Environmentalists agree that the Environmental Protection Agency came up short in its recent update to a federal emissions-trading program targeting pollution that creates smog. They may be mollified that the agency has hinted at possible improvements in the near future.

The race is on for Congress to finish what many lawmakers consider must-pass energy and environment legislation. Among the priorities for the remaining weeks in Congress are a comprehensive energy bill, the Water Resources Development Act, which includes funding for the water crisis in Flint, Mich., re-authorization of the Environmental Protection Agency's Brownfields fund to clean up polluted sites around the country, reform and funding of the U.S. Forest Service's wildfire-fighting procedures and addressing drought in California.

A selloff in fixed income is starting to snowball into a global market rout. Shares in Europe and Asia dropped the most since the aftermath of the U.K. Brexit vote in June, and U.S. stock-index futures fell as concern spread that central banks are preparing to wean markets off unprecedented stimulus.

Oil & Natural Gas

The Standing Rock Sioux's effort to block a four-state oil pipeline got a lifeline when the federal government temporarily stopped the project, a move some say likely may forever change the way all energy infrastructure projects are reviewed in the future. Just minutes after U.S. District Judge James Boasberg denied the Standing Rock Sioux tribe's attempt to halt the construction of the Dakota Access oil pipeline that skirts the reservation in southern North Dakota, three federal agencies appealed to the pipeline company to "voluntarily pause" work on a segment that tribal officials say holds sacred sites and artifacts.

Sen. Bernie Sanders is trying to block a controversial oil pipeline from being constructed in North and South Dakota by adding an amendment to an otherwise popular infrastructure bill. The Vermont independent introduced

an amendment to the Water Resources Development Act of 2016 that would keep the secretary of the Army from allowing the Army Corps of Engineers to grant an easement so the Dakota Access Pipeline can cross Lake Oahe.

Looking for new business opportunities to counter a drop in revenues, the Alaska Railroad Corp. this month will become the first railroad in the U.S. to ship liquefied natural gas, in a demonstration project that could help deliver cheaper energy to Fairbanks. The state-owned railroad has signed an agreement to borrow two LNG containers from a company based in Vancouver, British Columbia, owned partly by Hitachi in Japan.

The nation's oil rig count rose by seven this week as more drilling rigs returned to the Gulf of Mexico after evacuating for Hurricane Hermine. The overall count of rigs actively seeking oil or natural gas increased by 11 this week with eight of them offshore and just three on land.

Republican presidential nominee Donald J. Trump said on Wednesday that the United States should "take the oil" in Iraq as part of the "spoils of war" and to keep it out of the hands of ISIS. "I've always said, shouldn't be there, but if we're going to get out, take the oil," he said.

Fears that dozens of Waterville-Whitehouse area residents expressed at a March 16 public hearing have come true: The state of Ohio has given Houston-based Spectra Energy authorization to build a highly controversial compressor station to move natural gas along its upcoming NEXUS Gas Transmission pipeline. The permit was one of five the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency announced for the NEXUS project moments before the agency closed its doors for business late Friday afternoon.

A natural gas company is putting \$1.5 million toward repairs on a West Virginia road worn down by traffic from the industry's drilling and fracking operations. The state Division of Highways says Antero Resources will make the contribution for repairs to West Virginia Route 74 north of Pennsboro in Ritchie County.

French oil major Total SA is taking full control of the Barnett Shale oil-and-gas leases in Texas that it shared with joint-venture partner Chesapeake Energy Corp., after the U.S. shale producer decided to exit the once-prolific gas field to shore up its finances. Total said on Friday it is exercising rights to acquire a 75% share in the Barnett Shale assets to become the sole owner and operator of 215,000 partially developed acres of the field near Fort Worth in North Texas.

Natural gas prices fell Friday, erasing earlier gains, on expectations of weakening demand. Demand for natural gas is expected to decline in the coming weeks as the weather cools.

Oil fell for a second trading day in a row on Monday, after speculators cut their bullish bets by the most in three months last week and U.S. crude drillers added more rigs for a tenth week running. Brent crude oil futures LCOc1 fell 53 cents on the day to £47.48 a barrel, by 0830 GMT (04:30 a.m. EDT), while U.S. West Texas Intermediate futures CLc1 fell 66 cents to \$45.22 a barrel.

Utilities & Infrastructure

Warren Buffet doesn't need the likes of us touting his investment acumen. His holding company, Berkshire Hathaway, has compiled a stunning

record of achievement over many decades, beating broad stock market indices handily while acquiring some of the dullest companies in the world.

Five homeowners filed a lawsuit against Fresno, California on Friday, accusing the city of letting dangerous levels of lead and other toxins into the water supply and failing to alert the public of the potential danger, local media reported. Karen and Michael Micheli, Faith and David Nitschke and Jeanette Grider filed a lawsuit against Fresno, its department of public utilities and two contractors in the Fresno County Superior Court on Friday, the Fresno Bee reported.

Renewables

U.S. oil refiners, beset by the weakest profit margins in six years, have been laying off workers, revamping operations and ratcheting up pressure on regulators and lawmakers to tweak the renewable fuel program, whose costs have ballooned. The top 10 U.S. independent refiners look set to take a record hit on renewable fuel credits this year.

Coal

Vice President Joe Biden argued Friday that the federal government needs to help train people to transition to jobs with a future like information technology, and away from the more physically demanding jobs of the past. "It's cognitive capability now, rather than physical capability," he said at a discussion on tech hiring and training on Friday.

Thousands of retired coal miners gathered near the U.S. Capitol in 96-degree weather Thursday to push Congress to save a pension fund many of them depend on that could go broke by year's end. Lawmakers have not reached a deal to salvage the United Mine Workers of America's Health and Retirement Funds.

Speaking in Homewood, PA on Friday, Bill Clinton criticized the "coal people" in West Virginia for supporting Donald Trump. "We all know how [Hillary's] opponent has done well down in West Virginia and eastern Kentucky," the former president told the crowd at the Greater Pittsburgh Coliseum.

Nuclear

Nuclear power proponents say the energy source is crucial to reducing the impact of climate change. But ironically, "We'll have to solve global warming if we want to keep using nuclear power," says Union of Concerned Scientists nuclear safety expert Dave Lochbaum.

Exelon Corp. is moving toward closing the Clinton nuclear power plant next year, but one lawmaker said the lack of recent public activity by those trying to save the plant doesn't mean the effort is dead. State Rep. Bill Mitchell, R-Forsyth, said that even though there have been no news conferences or press releases lately, work continues on legislation for a clean-energy subsidy and utility rate changes that Exelon has said it needs to keep the plant economically viable.

Climate

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton waded back into the climate change debate on the side of Exxon Mobil this week, arguing that Massachusetts' attorney general exceeded her constitutional authority in launching a probe of the energy giant's marketing and sale of fossil fuel products to determine what the company knew of climate change and when it knew it. This is the second time in four months Paxton has stepped into an out-of-state global warming fight to defend the Irving-based oil and gas company.

Leonardo DiCaprio has unveiled his climate change documentary "Before the Flood" at the Toronto International Film Festival, saying the film is intended to "give the scientific community a voice." The film was directed by Fisher Stevens.

President Obama is hoping to complete two more international agreements to fight global warming in the coming months, shoring up his climate change legacy. His landmark Paris agreement is certain to go down as one of the most consequential - and controversial - global pacts of Obama's presidency. Now, he's also pushing world leaders to agree to cut down on greenhouse gases from refrigeration and from commercial aircraft.

Opinions, Editorials & Perspectives

Tackling climate change is a strategy for shared prosperity across the United States - we just need a plan for action. That's why a large coalition of businesses have entered into the legal process in support of the Clean Power Plan.

The key to America's national and energy security rests with our ability to provide for our own energy needs with our own natural resources, personnel and infrastructure. A proposed \$3.7-billion pipeline is planned for a 1,200-mile span from the Bakken oil fields of western North Dakota to Illinois.

One of Donald Trump's 100 wackiest ideas is that climate change is a hoax fabricated by China to harm America. "The concept of global warming was created by and for the Chinese in order to make U.S. manufacturing uncompetitive," Trump once tweeted.

Research Reports, Issue Briefs & Case Studies

The U.S. installed 1,665 megawatts (MW) of solar PV in Q1 2016 to reach 29.3 gigawatts (GW) of total installed capacity, enough to power 5.7 million American homes. With more than 1 million individual solar installations nationwide, the industry is on pace to nearly double in size in 2016.

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